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CRITIC IS DISPUTED ON WARREN GROUP

Oxford Professor's Doubts Dismissed in Capital

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 16 — Doubts expressed about the Warren Commission Report by Hugh Trevor-Roper. The British historian, are dismissed by informed persons here as without factual basis.

Mr. Trevor-Roper, professor of history at Oxford, wrote in the Sunday Times of London this week that the commission investigating President Kennedy's assassination had left important matters unresolved. He emphasized two.

First, he said, the suspected assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was questioned for 12 hours after his arrest by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the police. Oswald was warned that any statement could be used against him. Yet, suposedly, no notes or tape recordings were kept.

Validity Questioned

That could not be true, the professor said. "How could any statement made by Oswald be used against him if his statements were unrecorded?"

According to Warren Commission staff members and persons familiar with the police methods, this question by Professor Trevor-Roper is simply based on unfamiliarity with the situation. The fact is that few police forces tape or transcribe interviews with suspects.

Characteristically, the suspect is questioned at some length. If he makes incriminating admissions, a stenographer will be called in and a confession dictated and signed.

Indeed, some criminal law experts concerned about police interrogation are now pressing the suggestion that such interviews all be tape-recorded, so that there will be a check on the use of improper methods. The police have not generally been receptive to the idea.

The F.B.I. similarly avoids tape recordings in interviews but has two agents present at all times if possible so that their recollections can be confirmed.

In any event, Professor Trevor-Roper was called inaccurate by commission aides in suggesting that the F.B.I. played a major part in the questioning of Oswald. The Dallas police were in charge, and Federal agents had only limited access to the interrogation.

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DOUBTS DISCOUNTED: Hugh Trevor-Roper, British historian. Doubts he raised over Warren Commission report were rebutted by capital authorities.

The second of Professor Trevor-Roper's major points was phrased as follows: "Why also, and on whose authority, was the original medical report on President Kennedy's death destroyed?"

According to those most familiar with the commission's work, this question is also based on an inaccurate factual assumption — namely, that an "original" autopsy report was destroyed. In fact, none was.

The doctors who examined President Kennedy's body at Bethesda Naval Hospital did make some brief, fragmentary pencil notes that they threw away when they prepared their typewritten report. But in any case they were all questioned at length by the commission under oath, and no doubts were raised about their formal report.